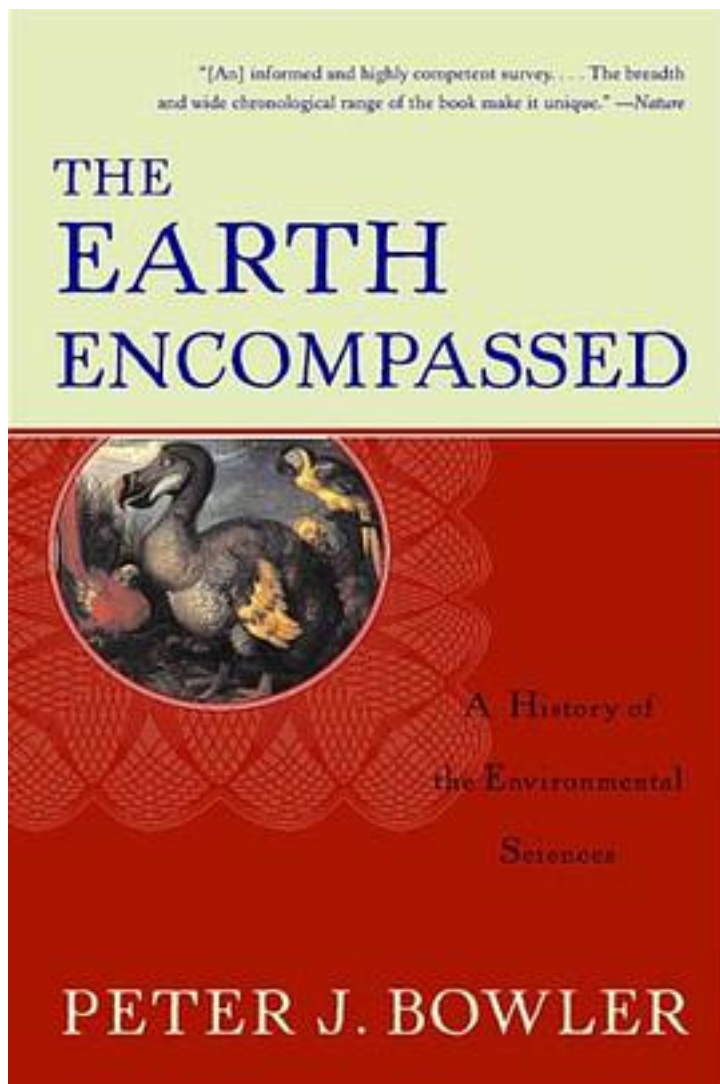


The Earth Encompassed



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出版者:W. W. Norton & Company

出版时间:2000-10-17

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780393320800

This authoritative volume chronicles humanity's long quest to understand its own origins. Peter J. Bowler brilliantly synthesizes discoveries in geography, geology, and evolutionary biology that have brought us to our current knowledge of the fragility and connectedness of life on earth and created the new science of ecology. Bowler adeptly balances a long historical perspective with discussion of specific developments in the major fields relating to the physical and organic environment. He brings to life theoretical debates surrounding the notion of nature as an interconnected whole and addresses the controversial ethical questions raised by the ways we investigate our world and our use of the planet's resources. This book is not only the history of a discipline but also a wide-ranging study of scientific and theoretical innovations and the cultural and professional factors that influence the way scientists explain and understand their observations.

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